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## DOCUMENTARY

We propose to begin, in this the initial number of our Quarterly, the publication of a series of documents relating to the conquest of California in 1846. Mr. H. H. Bancroft in his History of California presented a very thorough study of this period, but reproduced very few of the original documents on which the History was based, and some of the most important of these we propose to print.

The recently discovered papers of Lieutenant E. M. Kern, bought by Mr. Henry E. Huntington at an auction sale last year and known as the Fort Sutter Papers, consist largely of documents referring to the Bear Flag revolution. Mr. Charles Templeton Crocker has in his collection a number of papers formerly belonging to Rear Admiral Sloat, many of which also refer to this movement, and most of which have never been published.

The fourth document contained in this number is one of the original proclamations signed by William B. Ide at Sonoma, June 15, 1846. This document is now in the possession of Mr. Henry E. Huntington, and by his kind permission we are permitted to publish it, together with a facsimile reproduction. The rest of the papers printed in this number are from the Sloat manuscripts in the possession of Mr. Crocker, and from the Bancroft Library.

[Bear Flag Papers—60. Bancroft Library.]

We, the undersigned, members of the Republican party in California, having taken Gen. M. G. Vallejo, Lieut. Col. Victor Prudon and Capt. D. Salvador Vallejo, as prisoners Plede ourselves that in so doing or in any other portion of our actions we will not disturb private property molest themselves their families or the citizens of the town of Zanamora or its vicinity our object alone being to prevent their opposition to the .....gners of the .....of the liberation

(Rest torn)

[This fragment, which formerly belonged to General Vallejo, is probably the first form in which this guaranty was written, but not proving entirely satisfactory, the signatures were torn off and it was replaced by the following.]

[Bear Flag Papers—19. Bancroft Library.]

We the undersigned having resolved to establish a government up on republican principles in connexion with others of our fellow citizens and having taken up arms to suport it we have taken three Mexican officers as prisoners, Gen. M. G. Vallejo, Lieut Col. Victor Prudon and capt D. Salvador Vallego, having formed and published to the world no regular plan of Government feel it our duty to say that it is not our intention to take or injure any person who is not found in opposition to the cause nor will we take or destroy the property of private individuals further than is necessary four our immediate support.

EZEKIEL MERRITT  
R. SEMPLE  
WILLIAM FALLON  
SAMUEL KELSEY

[In Semple's handwriting.]

[Bear Flag Papers—61. Bancroft Library.]

Consta pr la presente qe habiendo sido sorprendido pr. una numerosa fuerza armada qe me tomo pricionero y á los gefes y oficiales que estaban de guarnicion en esta plaza de la qe se apoderó la expresada fuerza, habiendola encontrado absolutamte indefensa, tanto yo, como los Sres. oficiales qe subscriben comprometemos nuestra palabra de honor, de qe estando bajo las garantias de pricioneros de guerra, no tomaremos las armas ni a favór ni contra la repetida fuerza armada de quien hemos recibido la intimacion del momento y un escrito firmado qe garantiza nuestras vidas, familias é intereses, y las de todo el vecindario de esta jurisdiccion mientras no hagamos oposicion.

Sonoma, Junio 14 de 1846.

Vor. Prudon.

M. G. Vallejo

Salvador Vallejo

[In handwriting of Salvador Vallejo.]

[Translation.]

The present witnesses that,—having been surprised by a numerous armed force which took me prisoner and the chiefs and officials who were in garrison in this place which the force alluded to took possession of, finding it absolutely undefended, I, together with the officials who subscribe their names, promise on our word of honor that being under the guaranties of prisoners of war we will not take arms either in favor of or against the armed force referred to, from whom we have received this moment an intimation and a signed writing which guarantees our lives, families and interests, and those of all

the inhabitants of this jurisdiction, as long as we do not make any opposition.



[From the original in Mr. Huntington's Library.]

### **A PROCLAMATION**

To all persons, Citizens of Sonoma, requesting them to remain at peace, and to follow their rightful occupations without fear of Mollestation.

The Commander in Chief of the Troops assembled at the Fortress of Sonoma give his inviolable pledge to all persons in California not found under Arms that they shall not be disturbed in their persons, their property or social relations one to another by men under his command.

He also solemnly declares his object to be First, to defend himself and companions in Arms who were invited to this country by a promise of Lands on which to settle themselves and families who were also promised a "Republican Government," who, when having arrived in California were denied even the privilege of buying or renting Lands of their friends, who instead of being allowed to participate in or being protected by a "Republican Government" were oppressed by a "Military Despotism". who were even threatened, by "Proclamation" from the Chief Officer of the aforesaid Despotism, with extermination if they would not depart out of the Country; leaving all their property, their arms and beasts of burden, and thus deprived of the means of flight or defence. We were to be driven through deserts, inhabited by hostile Indians to certain destruction. To overthrow a "Government" which has seized upon the property of the Missions for its individual aggrandizement; which has ruined and shamefully oppressed the labouring people of California, by their enormous exactions on goods imported into this country; is the determined purpose of the brave men who are associated under his command.

He also solemnly declares his object in the Second place to be to invite all peaceable and good Citizens of California who are friendly to the maintenance of good order and equal rights (and I do hereby invite them to repair to my camp at Sonoma without delay) to assist us in establishing and perpetuating a



## A Proclamation

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The Commander in Chief of assembled at the Fort of Sonoma, inviolable pledge to all persons not found under arms that they should be disturbed in their persons, their property, relations one to another by men in command.

He also solemnly declares his First, to defend himself and company who were invited to this country of Lands on which to settle themselves who were also promised a "Republic" who, when having arrived in California even the privilege of buying or renting their friends, who instead of being participate in or being protected by "Government" were oppressed by a "Despotism" who were even threatened with "extermination" from the Chief officer of the "Despotism", with extermination if they were out of the Country; leaving all their arms and beasts of burden, and the means of flight or defence. We are through deserts, inhabited by hostile

## A Proclamation

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at peace, and to follow their rightful  
rights without fear of Molestation.

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at the Fort of Sonoma give his  
pledge to all persons in California  
under arms that they shall not be dis-  
turb their persons, their property or social  
rights one to another by men under his com-

also solemnly declares his object to be  
defend himself and companions in arms  
invited to this country by a promise  
on which to settle themselves and families  
also promised a "Republican Government",  
having arrived in California were denied  
privilege of buying or renting Lands of  
lands, who instead of being allowed to  
live in or being protected by a "Republican  
Government" were oppressed by a "Military Des-  
pot" who were even threatened, by Proclama-  
tion the Chief officer of the aforesaid Des-  
pot with extermination if they would not depart  
Country; leaving all their property, their  
livestock and beasts of burden, and thus deprived of  
means of flight or defence. We were to be driven  
into deserts, inhabited by hostile Indians to



not found under arms that they should be disturbed in their persons, their property, or their relations one to another by men under his command.

He also solemnly declares his intention First, to defend himself and compensate those who were invited to this country by the promise of Lands on which to settle themselves, and who were also promised a "Republican Government" who, when having arrived in California, were even the privilege of buying or renting lands for themselves and their friends, who instead of being able to participate in or being protected by the "Republican Government" were oppressed by a "Monarchical Government" who were even threatened with "extermination" from the Chief Officer of the army, with extermination if they were driven out of the Country; leaving all their property, arms and beasts of burden, and the means of flight or defence. We were driven through deserts, inhabited by hostile Indians, to certain destruction. To overthrow a Government which had seized upon the property of the people for its individual aggrandizement, and to ruin and shamefully oppress the people of California, by their enormous debts on goods imported into this country, and to fulfill the purpose of the brave men who were associated under his command.

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He also solemnly declares his object  
-cond place to be to invite all peaceable  
Citizens of California who are friends  
maintenance of good order and equal  
(and I do hereby invite them to report  
at Sonoma without delay) to assist in  
-lishing and perpetuating a "Republican  
-ment" which shall secure to all; civil  
liberty; which shall detect and punish  
which shall encourage industry and  
-erature; which shall leave unshaken  
Commerce, Agriculture, and Mechanics.

He further declares that he has  
rectitude of our intentions; the faithfulness  
and the bravery of those who are now  
associated with him, by the principles of  
-servation; by the love of truth; and  
of tyranny - for his hopes of success.

He further declares that he believes  
-government to be prosperous and happy  
tendency must originate with its  
friendly to its existence. That to its  
its Guardians, its officers are its  
its Glory their reward. Signed

Head Quarters Sonoma  
June 15<sup>th</sup> 1846.

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servation; by the love of truth; and by the hat-  
red of any - for his hopes of success.

He further declares that he believes that a Gov-  
t. to be prosperous and happyfying in its  
administration must originate with its people, who are  
loyal to its existence. That its Citizens, mil-  
itiamen, its officers are its Servants, and  
deserve their reward. Signed William B. Ide.

Head Quarters Sonoma

June 15<sup>th</sup> 1846.



"Republican Government" which shall secure to all; civil and religious liberty; which shall detect and punish crime; which shall encourage industry virtue and literature; which shall leave unshackled by Fetters, Commerce, Agriculture, and Mechanism.

He further declares that he relies upon the rectitude of our intentions; the favor of Heaven and the bravery of those who are bound to, and associated with him, by the principle of self preservation; by the love of truth; and by the hatred of tyranny—for his hopes of success.

He further declares that he believes that a Government to be prosperous and happyfying in its tendency must originate with its people who are friendly to its existence. That its Citizens, are its Guardians, its Officers are its Servants, and its Glory their reward.

Signed William B. Ide.

Head Quarters Sonoma

June 15th 1846

There seems to be some doubt as to just who was the head of the party which captured Sonoma on the morning of June 14. Ezekiel Merritt was the ostensible leader, but John Grigsby seems to have been the chief of the party, which for some reason or other he did not seem to care to command in person; so when he was actually elected captain after the capture and there was some dissention among the men, he declined to serve, and William B. Ide was chosen. At the time of this election there was evidently some radical difference of opinion, first, not only as to what was intended to be accomplished, but second and most important at the moment,—what was the next step to pursue?

There are a number of accounts of what took place, most of them written long afterwards, and most of them being more or less biased by afterwards conceived ideas as to the real object of the movement. In the afternoon of the 14th, Merritt, who was the original leader, Grigsby, who was probably the real leader, Semple, who was one of the most prominent men in the movement, and six or seven others, went to Fort Sutter with the prisoners. During the night of the 14th, or early morning of the 15th according to Ide himself, a proclamation was prepared. So far as known at the present time, only one copy of the original now is in existence. It is probable that a number were made, most likely written by various members

of the party, but presumably all signed by Ide. Several of these proclamations were copied at the time or shortly afterward, and the copies which now exist show various differences, chiefly in spelling, punctuation, and the use of capital letters, which differences may have arisen either in copying the first one by different people, or else in the copying afterwards of these first proclamations prepared at Sonoma. The copies as we know them appear with different dates—15th, 17th, and 18th. Just why some were dated the 17th and 18th is hard to tell, as they do not present any modification of sufficient importance to entitle them to be redated. The following copies are noted in Bancroft:

Larkin's Official Correspondence, II, 69-71—June 15:72—June 18.

Sawyer's Document Manuscripts, 49-51—June 15.

Oregon Spectator, July 14, 1846. (Printed). June 15.

San Francisco Alta, January 20, 1866. (Printed from one of the originals, at that time in the California Pioneers' Society.)

Other copies are as follows:

Sloat's Manuscripts, dated June 17, in Missroon's handwriting, and another dated June 18th.

Original sold in New York, American Art Galleries, December 6, 1921.

Biographical Sketch of William B. Ide, (printed) page 138.

An examination of these various copies discloses the fact that there are no differences between those dated June 15, except differences in spelling, punctuation, and the use of capital letters, with two exceptions: in the Sawyer copy the word "happyfying" is omitted in the last paragraph, leaving a space, and in the Larkin copy the word appears as "happy", with a comma after it; in the copy in the Spectator and the one which is in the Sawyer documents, the word "commander" is added after William B. Ide's signature. These differences, however, do not indicate any intentional change in the original document but have obviously occurred in transcribing copies from the originals which in themselves may have differed in these respects.

The copy in the Sloat manuscripts dated the 17th is the

same as the original except that the word "not" has been omitted before the word "depart" in the third paragraph, obviously through negligence in copying.

In the Sloat manuscripts there are two copies of this proclamation dated June 18th, one attached to Guerrero's statement, published hereafter, and the other having at the bottom in a different handwriting "The flag used by the above named party, is white, red border,—large Star, and a grizzly bear." This is a slightly different form of the proclamation, apparently rewritten with an attempt to improve the English. There is only one important change, and that is in the fourth paragraph, at the end, which reads as follows: "which shall secure to us all, civil and religious liberty, which shall encourage virtue and literature which leave unshackled by fetters. Agriculture Commerce and Mechanism." It is written in the first person after the first two paragraphs, and in the last paragraph the words "in its tendency" are omitted and "happy" is used for "happyfying."

In Ide's Biographical Sketch there is a copy of the proclamation which differs considerably from the original, indicating that Ide had made certain changes at the time he wrote his letter to Senator Wombaugh. Wombaugh was a member of the California senate which convened January 5, 1852, and it is therefore certain that the letter was written some time between that date and the time of Ide's death in December of the same year. The differences consist, principally, in the insertion of the word "religion" after "property" in the first clause, the use of the expression "our women and children" in place of "himself" in the second clause, the insertion in the third clause of these words, "by its treachery in the bestowment of public lands", and in the fifth clause of the words, "upon the wisdom and good sense of the people of California". None of these expressions occur in the original or in any of the copies which we have examined, and we are forced to the conclusion that Ide edited the document when he copied it for his statement made to Senator Wombaugh.

As a matter of interest, we insert herewith a copy of the one which was printed in the *Alta California* of January 20, 1866. This was certified to by L. L. Lull as being in Ide's own handwriting and with his proper signature. According to another printed certificate, signed by Manuel Castro, the procla-

mation had been sent to him and remained in his possession until some time not stated.

[Alta California, January 20, 1866.]

### A PROCLAMATION

To all persons Citizens of Sonoma requesteng them to remain at peace and to follow their rightful Occupations without fear of Molestion.

The Commander in Chief of the Troops assembled at the Fortress of Sonoma gives his inviolable pledge to all persons in California not found under armes, that they shall not be disturbed in their persons their property or Social relations one to another by men under his comand.

He also solemnly declairs his object to be first To defend himself and company in armes who ware invited to this country by a promise of lands on which to settle themselves and families who were also promest a Republican Government who when having arived in California were denied even the privaledge of bying or renting lands of their friends, who insted of being allowed to participate in or being protected by a Republican Government were opprest by a Military Disposition who were even threatened by proclamation forom the Chief Officer of the aforesaid Dispotism with extermination if they would not depart out of ther country leaving all their property their arms and beasts of burden and thus deprived of the means of flight or defence, we ware to be driven through desarts inhabited by hostile Indians to certain destruction. To overthrow a Government which has seized upon the property of the Mission for its individual aggrandisement which has ruined and shamfully oppressed the people of California by their enormis exactions on goods imported into his country is the Determined propose of the brave men who are associated under his Comand.

He solomly declairs his object in the second plase to be to invite all peace and good citizens of California who are friendly to be maintainance of good order and equal writes (and I do hereby invite them to repair to my camp at Sonoma without delay) to asist us in establishing and perpetuating a Republic Government which shall secure to all civil and religious liberty which shall detect and punish crime encourag industry virtue

and literature which shall leave unshackled by Fetters Commerce agriculture and mechanism.

He further declares that he relies upon the rectitude of our intentions, the favor Heaven and the bravery of those who are bound to and associated with him by the principle of self preservation by the love of truth and by the hatred of tyranny for his hopes of success.

He further declares that he believes that a Government to be prosperous and happyfying in its tendency must orgenite with its people who are friendly to its existance its citizens are its guareans its officers and its servents and its glory their reward.

(Sined) WILLIAM B. IDE  
Comder

Head Quarters Sonoma  
June 15th 1846

[From Mr. Crocker's Sloat Manuscripts, with Bartlett's signature but in another handwriting.]

**Statement of the interview between El Senor Don Jose de la Rosa, and Commander Jno. B. Montgomery Comr. U. S. Ship Portsmouth by Lieut. W. A. Bartlett U. S. N. Interpreter, by order of Commander Montgomery.**

Don Jose de la Rosa on coming on board the Ship desired to inform Capt. Montgomery, that he brought information from Don Guadalupe Vallego Military Comnr. of Sonoma "which he desired to give the moment Capt. Montgomery could receive him.

On being received by Capt. Montgomery I was directed to act as interpreter when Senor de la Rosa proceeded to deliver his message, which I wrote as follows.

Don Guadalupe Vallejo desires to inform Capt. Montgomery of the proceedings which took place at Sonoma "Yesterday Morning. At 5 A. M. there arrived at Sonoma a party of about eighty men, as they said from the Sacramento, they at once took forcible possession of the place; and posted themselves in the Cuartel" then made prisoners of Genl. Vallejo, Capt. Don Salvador Vallejo, and Lieut Col. Don Victor Prudhome, all of whom are Officers of the Mexican Army.

Then a Mr. Merritt, who appeared to have the command, or exercise the authority with the party; handed the Genl. a Convention "demanding of him the surrender of all the arms and Government property in Sonoma and that the Officers above named should remain Prisoners in Sonoma," which place they should not leave.

The Genl. replied that he must surrender to the force in Arms, and did so surrender when the party demanded further, that all the above named Officers should go with them to their camp on the Sacramento River.

Genl. Vallego then requested them to show their authority or determination (*abajo que plano*) and as they said they were Americans he desired they should exhibit their authority from the Govt. of the U. S. They replied that they did not come under the authority of the U. S. but having seen a proclamation of Genl. Castro threatening to drive all foreigners out of the Country, they had taken up arms in self defence.

They then made prisoner of the Alcalde "and told him that if any person in the place or neighborhood attempted to notify other places of this act, or raise a force to oppose them, they would at once shoot the Officers they then held prisoners. The Alcalde was then set at Liberty, but told, if he did not present any opposition to them, he would also be shot.

Genl. Vallego desired to inform Capt. Montgomery of these facts; and to ask of him to use his authority or exert his influence to prevent the commission of acts of violence by this party, inasmuch: as they seemed to be without any effectual head or authority, to this end he hoped for an Officer to be sent to the place, or a letter that would have the effect of saving the helpless inhabitants from violence and anarchy.

Senor Don Jose de la Rosa was directed by Genl. Vallego (at 11 AM. yesterday) to come with this message, but could not leave until 3 PM.

A few moments past 11 the party left a garrison of 25 Men at Sonoma protected by seven pieces of Cannon, the others with the Prisoners left for the Sacramento.

#### **Reply of Commander Montgomery to the Message of Genl. Vallego.**

Sir: You will say to Genl. Vallejo on my part that I at

once and entirely disavow this movement as having proceeded under any authority of the U. S. or myself, as the Agent of my Govt. in this country or on the this coast. It is a movement entirely local and with which I have nothing to do, nor can I in any way be induced to take part in the controversy which belongs entirely to the internal politics of California.

If they are Americans as they avow themselves they are beyond the jurisdiction of the laws and officers of the U. S., and must now take all the responsibilities of the position in which they have placed themselves, being answerable to the laws of Mexico and California.

I have now for the first time heard of this movement, and in making the most positive disavowal for myself and my Govt. having in anywise instigated or aided this, I also disavow the same on the part of Captain Freemont U. S. Topl. Engineers, now in the country for scientific purposes.

If my individual efforts can be at any time exercised to allay violence or prevent injury to innocent persons it shall be exerted, but not as an officer of the Govt. of the U. S. I cannot have anything to do with either party. They must take the responsibilities of their own acts. From what has already transpired, I think it clear, that no violence will be committed on any one who is not found with arms in their hands.

You will assure Genl. Don Guadalupe Vallejo of my sympathy in his difficulties, but I cannot possibly interfere in the local politics of California.

Senor de la Rosa then thanked Capt. Montgomery for his sentiments and sympathy stated that all was distinctly understood and translated and that he would place this statement in the hands of Don Guadalupe Vallejo at the earliest moment.

I hereby certify that the proceeding statement is a fair translation of the Message, and reply read to Captain Montgomery, and Senor de la Rosa.

(Signed) WASHINGTON A. BARTLETT  
Lieut.

U. S. Ship Portsmouth  
Sausalito June 15th 1846.

**Copy of Mr. William B. Ide's Letter**

[From Mr. Crocker's Sloat Manuscripts, probably in Bartlett's handwriting.]

Sanoma, June 15th, 1846,  
Our present Head Quarters

Dear Sir/

I beg leave to inform you by express, of a change in the Political affairs of Sanoma, and the Sacramento Valley; which has taken place within the last week. With the circumstances which led to this change, you are doubtless acquainted: viz, the hostility of the Spaniards to the American emigrants. About 40 days since a proclamation was issued by the Spaniards ordering all Foreigners to leave the country, and forbidding them to take any of their property with them, at the same time threatening them with extermination should they presume to remain in the Country. The immigration to the States was gone; the company for Oregon had left us. There was now no alternative but to die silently, and singly by the hands of our enemies or fly to meet the foe. Information had reached the upper end of Sacramento Valley (where I resided) that 200 Spaniards were on their way up the Valley for the purpose of destroying our wheat, burning our houses and driving off our cattle. Aroused by appearances so shocking, a very few of us resolved to meet our enemy (being encouraged by the known presence of Capt. Freemont's command in the Valley) and dispose of our difficulties in the best possible manner. The 200 Spaniards proved to be a band of horses (about 200) guarded by a Spanish Officer and 15 Men, being driven up the Valley as far as Capt. Sutters, thence across the River for the lower settlements for the declared and expressed purpose of being mounted by Soldiers and sent back to enforce said Proclamation. In self defence those few men (viz 12) seized the moment and pursued those horses, captured their guard and drove the horses to the neighborhood of Capt. Freemonts Camp. Still writhing under the dreadful necessity above alluded to we pursued our way both Night and Day adding to our number a few true hearts to the number 34 men, until the dawn of the morning of the 14th inst when we charged upon the Fortress of General Guadalupe Vallego, and captured 18 prisoners (among whom were 3 of the highest Officers in the Californian Govt. and all the Military Officers who reside in Sonoma (8 Field Pieces, 200 stand of arms, a great quantity of Cannon, Canister, and Grape Shot, and a little less than 100 lbs of



powder (quite too little to sustain us against an attack by the use of cannon). By the Articles of Capitulation it was contemplated we were to be provisioned by the generosity of our Captured Genl, while we can keep possession or while opposition renders possession necessary. By another arrangement of cannon and fieldpieces, we have strengthened our position and continue to hold it, under the authority of twenty four well armed men and (as we have good right to believe) the rule of the People. The Alcalde we discharged under a new appointment, the Soldiers were set at liberty, and the said Officers were escorted by ten armed men to an assylum under the generous protection of Capt. Freemont. This day we proclaim California a Republic, and our pledge of honor that private property shall be protected. With this, as we hear from various parts of the country, the Spaniards are not only satisfied but pleased. We are situated three or four miles North of the North end of the Bay, and are liable to be attacked by an enemy from beyond the bay but would repel any that should be made by the use of small arms. We have not Powder to work our Cannon, and therefore with our small force could not long resist the operation of cannon against us.

Destined as we are to certain destruction should we prove unsuccessful, we have the honor to be your Fellow Country Men, and whether we conquer or perish we are resolved to approve ourselves not unworthy the kindly regards of those who "Build to the honor and glory of the American Flag.

It is our object and earnest desire to embrace the first opportunity to unite our adopted and rescued country, to the country of our early home.

With every consideration of respect and by will of the People. I have the honor to be &c

WM. B. IDE.  
Commander in Chief  
at the Fortress of Sanoma

To/Commodore Stockton  
of the U. S. Navy.

**Answer to Mr. Ide**

[From Mr. Crocker's Sloat Manuscripts, probably in Bartlett's handwriting.]

U. S. Ship Portsmouth  
Sausalito Bay of San Francisco  
June 16th 1846.

Sir

On the point of dispatching an officer to Sonoma to confer with you respecting the state of alarm and apprehension into which your sudden movement seems to have thrown the helpless people of Sonoma and the country around, your messenger Mr. Todd arrived and handed me your communication of yesterday addressed to Commodore Stocton but designed, as Mr. Todd said for me. The circumstances therein stated, which has led to the hasty organization of the Foreign population of this part of California in opposition to the constituted authorities, had in part previously reached me through irregular channels not entirely to be relied on; and in respect to which I would only observe as a general rule without direct application or reference to the position in which you stand; that I hold it to be the privilege of all men everywhere, by such proper means as they possess, to counteract the sinister designs of treachery, and resist oppression in whatever form or manner they may be assailed by them, and that a right motive and a just cause, will be always characterized by a mild, tender, and humane regard, for the security of the happiness, proper interests, and privileges of others.

I am most happy Sir, to understand from Mr. Todd, that these (by proclamation) have been guaranteed to your prisoners and the defenceless people within your reach, and and I sincerely hope that whatever may be the future course of the popular government in which you are engaged that this policy may distinguish the conduct of your party as well as that that of your opposers.

Permit me Sir in response to your call for powder for the use of your party to say that I am here as a representative of a Government at peace, (as far as I know,) with Mexico and her province of California, having in charge the interests, & security of the commerce, and Citizens of the United States lawfully engaged in their peaceful pursuits, and have no right or authority to furnish munitions of war, or in any manner to

take sides with any political party, or even indirectly to identify myself, or official name, with any popular movement (whether of Foreign or native residents) of the country, and thus Sir, must decline giving the required aid.

Lieut. Missroon the executive officer of the U. S. Ship Portsmouth under my command, who will hand you this, will explain more fully than the few moments allowed me to answer your letter will permit me to do.

I am Sir Your Obt  
Servant

(Signed) JNO. B. MONTGOMERY

To Commander

Willm. B. Ides Esqr.

Commanding the Fortress of Sonoma  
Upper California.

### Missroon's Mission

[From Mr. Crocker's Sloat Manuscripts, probably in Bartlett's handwriting.]

Copy of Order to Lieut Missroon

U. S. Ship Portsmouth  
San Francisco June 15t. 1846.

Sir

By an especial Messenger sent to me by Don Guadalupe Vallejo, I am notified of the forcible occupation of the Town of Sonoma by a party of insurgents (foreign residents) of the Country, among whom are said to be some persons from the U. States; and that General Don Guadalupe Vallejo with several other Mexican officers; have been sent Prisoners to the Sacramento—and threatened to be detained as hostages for the quiet Submission of the surrounding Country, leaving their families and other inoffensive persons in and about Sonoma in a state of painful agitation; through apprehensions of violence and cruel treatment from the insurgent party in charge of the town. In consequence of this state of things, General Vallejo has appealed to me, requesting the interposition of any authority or influence I may possess over the insurgents to prevent the perpetuation of any acts of violence on their part upon the defenceless people. I have in my reply to General Vallejo (by his messenger) stated my previous ignorance of the popular movement in question, distinctly & emphatically disavowed all

agency of the U. States Government or myself as her representative in producing it, and disclaimed all right or authority to interfere between the opposing parties, or in any way to identify my movements with theirs. But in Compliance with the urgent calls of humanity, I deem it my duty to use my friendly endeavors with the dominant party to secure (by the favor of God) for the defenceless people of Sonoma that Security of life property & privilege to which all are entitled.

In pursuance of these views Sir, you are directed to proceed in one of the Ships boats to Sonoma, and on your arrival there you will wait on the officer or person commanding the party having possession of the town, and as it is possible he is not fully aware of the extent & nature of the feelings produced in the minds of the population by this recent movement you will inform him of the State of apprehension & terror into which it seems to have thrown them & disclaiming all right or purpose on my part of interference between them & their actual opposers and without touching upon the merits of their course farther than may not be avoided in course of conversation. Be pleased (in such terms as your own sense of propriety will dictate) respectfully to request from me that he will extend his protecting care over the defenceless families of their prisoners and other inoffensive persons of Sonoma, & exert his influence with others in order to secure to them the uninterrupted enjoyment of their domestic & Social privileges.

You will afterwards wait on the Alcalde or presiding civil officer of Sonoma & inform him of what has been done (at the instence of Don Guadalupe Vallejo) communicating any Satisfactory assurances which you may have recieved from the insurgent chief, calculated to allay the general apprehension, after which when Sufficiently recruited you will return to this Ship and render me a written report.

To

Respectfully I am Sir

Lieut. I. S. Missroon

Your Ob't Serv't.

Executive officer

(Signed) JNO. B. MONTGOMERY

U. S. Ship Portsmouth

Commander

#### Appendage to Mr. Missroon's Order

Dear Sir

As an appendage to the orders handed you last evening, I wish you to endeavor in as forcible a manner as possible, to

represent to the person or persons, of the insurgent party with whom you may confer at Sonoma; and to impress their minds with a sense of the advantages which will accrue to their cause (whatever its intrinsic merits may be) from pursuing a course of kind & benevolent treatment of Prisoners, as well as towards the defenceless inhabitants of the Country generally with whom they may have to do, and endeavor as far as propriety will permit to obtain a promise of kind & humane treatment towards General Vallejo & his companions in their possession as prisoners.

I am Sir Respectfully

Your Ob't. Serv't.

To (Signed) JNO. B. MONTGOMERY  
Lieut. I. S. Missroon Commander.  
U. S. Ship Portsmouth

### Report of Lt. Missroon

U. S. Ship Portsmouth  
San Francisco June 17t. 1846

Sir

In pursuance of your order of the 16t. Inst. to proceed to Sonoma, and to endeavor by all proper means in my power, to secure to the females and unoffending portion of the population of that District, some degree of Security for their persons and property during the occupancy of the place by certain Insurgents, chiefly foriegners.

I have the honor to report, in obedience to that order, that I left the Ship on the day of receiving your instructions, and reached the town about Sunset, where I found about 25 men under arms, and having Six or Seven pieces of Artillery, with Several hundred Stand of Arms, the whole party is only thirty five. I waited upon the Commanding officer Wm. B. Ide, and received from him both verbal & written assurances, of his intention to maintain order, & to respect both the persons & property of all persons residing within the limits of his Command, he also handed me a copy of a proclamation which he had issued on the day after his occupation of the town & which I herewith present to you marked A. in which you will observe that these promises of protection are set forth in explicit terms, and which I would remark to you seemed to me to have fully assured the inhabitants of their Safety, although Sonoma is

evidently under Martial law. By this proclamation you will also observe, that California is declared to be an Independent Republic—the insurgent party has hoisted a Flag with a white field, with a border or Stripe of red on its lower part, & having a Star & Bear upon it.

I informed the Commanding officer of the State of terror, into which his movement upon Sonoma had thrown the inhabitants in and about the Yerba Buena as directed by my instructions.

I then waited upon the Alcalde of the place, and informed him thro' my interpreter, that my visit was entirely of a peaceful Character, that it had been induced by a message which my Commander had recieved from the late Mexican Commander General Vallejo, now a prisoner in the hands of the insurgents, asking his (my Commanders) interference for the protection of females & unoffending inhabitants—that assurances of respect & protection were freely me by the Commanding officer of the party under arms, & that I explicitly made it known to him for the information of the Surrounding Country—That my Commander disclaimed any & all interference in the matter, other than what was directed by motives of humanity.

After these interviews, I then called upon the family of General Vallejo, and moderated their distress by the assurances of Safety for the General which I had received and informing them that the prisoners were held at hostages.

Having completed the object for which I went to Sonoma I left the place today with the thanks of both parties, about Meridian & reached the Ship about Sunset;

Before taking my departure, I deemed it best to reassure the Alcalde in order to prevent any necessity for future explanation, which is So apt to grow out of business transacted with Mexicans, especially through an interpreter—I therefore addressed the letter marked B. appending to it the written pledge which I had obtained from the Commander of the foriegners in possession of the Place, and I herewith hand you a copy of it. It only remains Sir for me to add, that so far as I could judge & observe the utmost harmony & good order prevailed in the Camp, & that I have every reason to believe, that the

pledges of kind treatment towards all who may fall into their hands will be faithfully observed.

Respectfully Sir

Your Ob't Serv't

(Signed) I. S. MISSROON

Ist. Lieut. U. S. S. Portsmouth

To

Commander

Jno B Montgomery

Commanding U. S. Ship Portsmouth

Bay of San Francisco.

[The document marked "A" is a copy of Ide's Proclamation dated June 17.]

## B.

Sonoma June 17th 1846

Sir

As you were informed yesterday thro' my interpreter my visit to this place is of a strictly mediatorial character and was induced by the application of General Vallejo through his messenger, Senor Rosa, to Captain Montgomery requesting of him to adopt measures for the protection of the females & peaceable inhabitants of Sonoma.

I have the pleasure to assure you of the intention of the Foriegners, now in arms and occupying Sonoma, to respect the Persons of all individuals, and their property who do not take up arms against them, and I leave with you a Copy of the pledge which the Commander of the party has voluntarily given to me, with the view to the pacification of all Alarm.

Respectfully

Your Ob't Servant

To

Signed I. S. MISSROON

The Alcalde of Sonoma

Lieut. U. S. Navy

## Pledge

I pledge myself that I will use my utmost exertion, to restrain and prevent the men in arms under my command, (all of whom present acknowledge my authority and approve of forbearance and humanity,) from perpetrating any violence, or in any manner molesting the peaceable inhabitants in person or

property of California while we continue in arms for the liberty of California.

(Signed) WM. B. IDE  
Commander

Sonoma June 17th 1846.

Witness to the above Signature  
I. S. MISSROON  
Lieut. U. S. Navy  
and Executive officer of the  
U. S. Ship Portsmouth.



[From Larkin's Documents IV, 158. Bancroft Library.]

[Original.]

Vice Consulate Yer Buena  
June 16th 1846

My Dear Sir,

This moment hearing of a courier about to start for Monterey I hasten to inform you of the receipt of your letter announcing the arrival of the Congress at the Islands on the 13t May—and of H. B. Mts. Ship Juno at Monterey. Within the last two or three days there has been a popular movement among the foreign residents of this country in the vicinity of the Sacramento—and Sonoma is now occupied by a company of the Insurgents commanded by Mr. William B. Ide an American from the U. States. The two Vallejo's and several other officers of note have been sent prisoners to the Sacramento, with every assurance of protection & humane treatment from their captors who profess to have been moved to this seeming act of violence only with a view to their own safety and by a proper regard to the success of their future operations (whatever they may be. I understand also from good authority (having been visited by couriers from both sides) that the strongest guaranties have been given by Proclamation—by the Insurgent's for the security of life, property & priviledge to the families of their prisoners—and to all other persons remaining quiet and inoffensive in their conduct throughout the Country—under denunciations of the severest punishment upon offenders in this respect—and also I am told that strict orders has been given to deal kindly & humanely with the prisoners in charge—this I have from a Mr. Todd the Messenger sent to me by Mr. Ide—the other Messenger alluded to was Don Jose de la Rosa—from Genl. Vallejo,



both of whom left me this morning in one of my boats for Sonoma. I am happy to find there is a probability of Commodore Stocktons arrival on the Coast very soon, and in accordance with the purpose I expressed before leaving Monterey—hope to leave here about the 25<sup>t</sup> Inst. for that port. We are all well onboard—Make my respectful salutations to Mrs. Larkin And believe me

Sir Your Obt Servt  
JNO. B. MONTGOMERY  
Commander

To  
Thos. O. Larkin Esqr.  
Consul of the U. States  
at Monterey Calafornia

Written in haste—



[From Larkin's Documents IV, 160. Bancroft Library.]  
[Original.]

Yerba buena June 17<sup>th</sup> 1846.

Sir

This is to inform you of what has taken place in Sonoma, it appears that on the 14<sup>th</sup> instant about forty men, said to be Americans, entered the town of Sonoma and took charge of the arsenal (if it may so be cald) a person by the name of Ide is in command, they have taken as prisoners Dn. G. Vallejo, S. Vallejo, V. Prudon, and J. P. Leese, it appears verry strange to me, that they should take Mr. Leese prisoner when he is known to be an American and a Friend, I Suppose that there is a something going on that we know nothing of, as Captain Montgomery has written you, I shall not say anything about what message he has received, and what answer he made, we are now in a critical situation, and if the Portsmouth was not here I am sure things would not go on as easy as they do, you must thinck it strange that you have not received this news from me sooner, but it is not my fault ever since the news came here I have been trying to get some one to take you a letter, but without success until my backaro returned here who takes a pass port from this place for Santa Cruz, so that he may not be waylaid weather I am Justifiable in sending you this courier I do not know, but if such news is not of enough account to send one, you will oblidge me by informing me, it is not my fault every one that I have tried to get, have refused, for, or in, fear of being prest by J. Castro, and made soldiers of,

I have agreed to pay the boy \$30. and have allready paid him part, he will return by the way of Santa Cruze, unless you wish him to return direct, Mr. Gillispie left here a few days since with supplies for Captain Freemont and acording to what he said when he left ought to be back in three of four days, I was told to day that Dn. Jose Castro is at Santa Clara prepairing to go up the Sacramento to put things to rights, it is a great pitty for the Mexican nation that they have not got some more such patriotic oficers as Captain Hinckley pretends to be, I caled on him yesterday as the request of Capt Montgomery to pay him a visit which Capt M. wished to make, in the course of conversation, he mentioned the Calafornians were fools if they did not emidiately take as many Americans, prisons, as were taken in sonoma by the Americans, and keep them until the others were given up, I then mentioned, that I thought that he would have some difficulty to find so many, real Americans in the place, he then answered that they might posible take me for one to commence with, and so on, Captain Montgomery, merely told, that he should be verry sorry to se any thing of the kind take place, for it would only be putting him to some trouble, the answer however was to the point and Captain H. haled in again, I realy wish that Captain Hinckleys ofice would be taken from him, he only does all the injury he can here, and is the greatest enemy that Americans have in this country, he is continually making disputes between those that arive here and the authorities, yesterday there was a Mr. Lasaros Everheart who applied to the Alcalde for a passport to Monterey and was refused, he emidiately caled on me to assist him in getting one, I caled on the Alcalde and he said that as he had come from Monterey without one that he might return without one and that at Sanches's farm there were men placed to se that no one passed, so he had better not attempt to go without one, he wishes you to get him one from Monterey so that he may return, I am sure that it is from Hinckleys advice that he was refused for I heard him say that he thought that he was one of the same gang at Sonoma about the knife you wrote, I send you one and wish you to accept of it, I have picked it out, and it is one I would carry myself no more at present, hoping to hear from you soon

I Remain Your Obt Servt

WM. A. LEIDESDORFF

T. O. Larkin Esqr.

U. S. Consul, Monterey

[From Departmental State Papers Tom. VII, pp. 58-9 Bancroft Library.]

[Copy.]

1846. Junio 16. Sta. Clara.

Comdte. gral Castro—Bando militar

Compañeros de armas: una legion de aventurs. de los Es. Us. del Norte, han sorprendido la frontera de Sonoma, llegando al estremo de tomar prisioneros á el Sor Comandte. Militar de aquel punto Coronel Dn. Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Tente. Cl. Dn. Victor Prudon, capitan Dn. Salvador Vallejo y Dn. Jacobo Pedro Leese Este atentado ha sido sin límites, faltando al derecho de gentes y á todos los pactos y principios establecidos.

Compañeros: esas armas qe soportais en vuestras manos á nombre de la nacion mejicana—á que tenemos el honor de pertenecer, son pa. defender á todo trance esos colores trigantes qe nos unen y qe por ellos han corrido torrentes de sangre; vuestro valor y patriotismo qe teneis ya acreditado no me dejan dudar qe con el mayor entusiasmo marcharemos á romper esa cadena apresora qe desea enlazararnos.

Soldados; la libertad, el decoro ó independa. y el honor, es uno de los vínculos con qe nos hallamos unidos y debemos defender, por cuyos principios se sacrificará vuestro gefe y amigo.

[Leaf inserted between leaves 60 and 61, written in pencil.]

Santa Clara. June 18. 1846.

“El Ciudadano José Castro, Tente. Coronel de Caballa. del Ejército Mexno. y Comandte Gen. into. del Depto. de Cals.

(Seal of the Comand. Gen. de la Alta Cal.)

Conciudadanos. La política rastrera de los agentes del Gobo. de los Ests. Uns. del Norte en este Depto., han preparado ya una porcion de aventureros que osadamente sin respetar el derecho de jentes, comienzan á invadirlo, apoderandose de la plaza de Sonoma soprendiendo en ella al comandte. militar de aquella frontera Coronel Dn. Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Tente Coronel Dn. Victor Prudon, Capitan Dn. Salvador Vallejo, y Dn. Jacobo Pedro Leese.

Compatriotas—La defensa de nuestra libertad, la religion

verdadera que han profesado nuestros padres, é independencia nos obligan á sacrificarnos antes de perder estos inestimables dones, desterrar de vuestros pechos toda idea mesquina de resentimientos, bolbed la cara, habrir los ojos, y ved esas familias, é inocentes hijos que desgraciadamente han caido en manos de nuestros enemigos, arrebatando de su ceno, á sus Padres, que pricioneros entre ellos nos llaman en su auxilio. Tiempo es todavia de formar una masa comun é inespugnable llena de justicia, no dudeis que la divina providencia nos dirigirá por el camino de la gloria, por el que no debeis vacilar que en este cuartel grâl con la pequeña guarnicion que lo forma, será el primero que se sacrifique vuestra conciudadano y amigo.

Cuartel grâl en Sta Clara—Junio 18 de 1846

JOSÉ CASTRO."

Dept. St. Pap. VII p 239.

[Note] The above is taken from an original bearing (apparently) Castro's signature; The writing seems to be in Francisco Arce's hand.

### [Translation of the Above Two Proclamations.]

[The first we have made, and the second is taken from one in the Larkin Documents, Official Correspondence II, 70-71, as this appears to be the best of several which we have seen.]

Companions in arms: A legion of adventurers from the United States of the North have surprised the frontier of Sonoma, going to the extreme of taking prisoners the military commander of that post Colonel Don Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Lieutenant Col. Don Victor Prudon, Captain Don Salvador Vallejo and Don Jacob Pedro Leese. This outrage has been without limits, contrary to the rights of people and of all established pacts and principles.

Fellow Citizens: Those arms which you carry in your hands in the name of the Mexican nation, to which we have the honor to belong, are for defending in every extremity the colors of the three guaranties which unite us and for which have flowed torrents of blood; your valor and patriotism which already you have proved do not leave me to doubt that with the greatest enthusiasm we shall march to break this tightening chain which threatens to bind us.

Soldiers: Liberty, decorum, independence and honor, is one of the bonds with which we find ourselves united and which

we should defend, for which principles your chief and friend will sacrifice himself.

"The Citizen, Jose Castro, Lieutenant Colonel of Horse in the Mexican Army, and acting General Commandant of the Department of California.

"Fellow Citizens, the low policy of the Agents of the United States of the North, in this Department have got up a portion of adventurers, that boldly and without respecting the rights of men, have began to invade it, having taken possession of the Town of Sonoma, surprising the Military Commander of that frontier, Colonel Don Mariano Guadalupe Vallejo, Lieutenant Colonel, Don Victor Prudon, Captain, Don Salvador Vallejo, and Mr. Jacob Leese.

Fellow Countrymen, the defence of our liberty, the true religion professed by our Fathers, and our independence, obliges us to sacrifice ourselves rather than lose these inestimable blessings; banish from your hearts all low ideas of resentment, turn your faces, open your eyes, and behold those families & innocent children which have unfortunately fallen into the hands of our enemies; snatched from the bosom of their fathers, who are now prisoners amongst the foreigners & calling loudly on us for assistance. It is yet time for us to form one solid mass which shall be impregnable, and full of justice, doubt not, but the Divine providence will dictate to us, the way to glory; and at the same time you ought not for one moment to doubt, that in this General Quarters, notwithstanding the smallness of the garrison of which it is composed, that the very first who sacrifices himself, will be your fellow Citizen and Friend.

Head Quarters, Santa Clara; June 17, 1846

(Signed) JOSÉ CASTRO.

And that this may reach the notice of all persons, I command that it be published & circulated, and fixed in the customary conspicuous places.

Monterey, June 22nd, 1846.

(Signed) J. S. ESCAMILLO, Alcalde.